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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4538
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RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUYNAAAC/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA PRIORITY
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RHHMHBA/COMPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI//N541// PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/HQ PACAF HICKAM AFB HI//CC/PA// PRIORITY
RUHBANB/OKINAWA FLD OFC US FORCES JAPAN CP BUTLER JA PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA PRIORITY
INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 7315
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 0621
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 3401
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 1154
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 9544
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1276
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC

UNCLAS TOKYO 004065

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STATE FOR I/RF, PA/PR/FPC/W, IIP/G/EA, EAP/PD, R/MR,
EAP/J, EAP/P, PM;
USTR FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;
TREASURY FOR OASIA/IMI;
SECDEF FOR OASD/PA;
CP BUTLER OKINAWA FOR AREA FIELD OFFICE;
PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION Q LEBANON CRISIS - TOKYO

LEAD STORIES: Friday morning's Tokyo Shimbun front-paged a remark Thursday by Assistant Secretary of State Hill at a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing, in which he reportedly disclosed that Iranian officials witnessed North Korea's launch of ballistic missiles on July 5.

¶1. "US Middle East Diplomacy at an Impasse" The liberal Asahi's Washington correspondent Umehara wrote (7/21): "With Israel's offensive in Lebanon continuing, it appears that the Bush administration's Middle East diplomacy is at an impasse, as the US already has to deal with an Iraq on the verge of civilwar and Iranian nuclear development. In addition, the administration's stated goal of expanding democracy has lost its luster in the face of the growing conflict. President Bush said: 'Diplomacy is something that takes time,' a statement that would have been unimaginable during the rush to war in Iraq.... The Bush administration has been unwavering in its support for Israel, describing its attack on Lebanon as an act of self-defense. The administration is unwilling to support international intervention in the Lebanon crisis, such as calls for a ceasefire or debate on the dispatch of an international force. European and Arab nations have been critical of this approach.... In the US, conservatives, who form the base of the Bush administration, have been calling its Middle East diplomacy weak-kneed. They have been particularly critical about the announcement by the administration in late May that it is ready to take part in negotiations with Iran, so long as the talks are limited to the nuclear issue.... In response, Secretary of State Rice said there would be no 'comprehensive bargaining,' dismissing the idea that there would be an administration turnaround on Iran, such as accepting the legitimacy of the regime or guaranteeing its survival."

